REMARKS

Claims 7-10 have been amended. Claims 7-10 remain in the application. Claims 1-6 were previously canceled. It should be appreciated that the amended claims merely clarify the invention described in the specification, and do not add new matter.

Claims 7 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Terry (US 5,364,303) in view of Korean Patent 2003031219A ('219). The Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

U.S. Patent Number 5,364,303 to Terry discloses an air vent with adjustable vanes for controlling air flow direction. In a second embodiment shown in FIGS. 5-8, the air vent 210 includes a housing 212 defining a housing outlet opening 214 in which are mounted a first row of horizontally oriented air vanes 216, and a second row of vertically oriented air vanes 218. Each air vane includes a front edge 220, rear edge 222 and opposed side edges 224, 226. The vanes 216 are operably connected as a unit via a link. One of the middle vanes is the control vane 238. The control vane 238 has a first and second notch 239, 242 in its rear edge 222. A control knob 250 or actuator for initiating the angular movement of the vanes is mounted within the first notch 239. The control knob includes a finger pull 252 and opposing and parallel first and second flanges 254 and 256 that define a control vane channel 258. The end of the second flange terminates in opposed mounting tabs 260 and 262, between which is mounted a link pin 264. The control knob is mounted to the control vane by snap-fitting the control vane into the control vane channel so that the first and second flanges 254, 256 of the control knob are disposed within the first notch of the control vane. In operation, the control knob slides upwardly and downwardly within the notch in order to place the vanes in a diffused mode of operation. Terry '303 does not disclose a vane having a rear edge with one notch for receiving a

compressively resilient pad that extends beyond the rear edge of the vane for continuously forcing the front edge of the vane into continuous contact with the inner portion of a recessed area of the knob, as disclosed by the Applicant.

The Korean patent publication KR2003031219A discloses a knob 10 for controlling the air vent of an automobile. The knob includes a recess for receiving the vane 18. An inner surface of the knob includes a notched portion. A shock absorbing material 14 is disposed within the notch in the knob, so that a rear side of the material in the knob is in contact with a front side of the vane 18. The Korean publication does not disclose a vane having a rear edge with one notch for receiving a compressively resilient pad, as disclosed by the Applicant.

In contradistinction, claim 7 discloses a vent control knob assembly for controlling the position of a vane for an air vent in an automotive vehicle. The vane D includes a front edge A, and an opposed rear edge B having only one notch C formed in the rear edge B. The control knob 12 includes an outer surface, and an inner surface 14 that defines a recess for receiving the vane. A first portion of the inner surface is adjacent a rear edge of the vane, and a second portion of the inner surface is adjacent the front edge of the vane. The knob also includes a side having a portion 16 that is open, for receiving the vane within the recess. The recess defined by the inner surface of the knob is slightly larger than the circumference of the outer surface of the vane, so that the knob snaps onto the vane, to fittingly engage the knob onto the vane. A compressively resilient silicone pad 18 is received into the one notched portion C of the rear edge B of the vane D. The pad extends beyond the rear edge B to contact the first portion 20 of the inner surface of the knob 12. The pad consistently forces the front edge A of the vane to be in <u>continuous</u> contact with the second portion 22 of the inner surface of the knob at all times, so that the control knob

and vane move together as an integral and one vent control knob assembly during operation of the control knob. Claim 10 is similar to claim 7, and includes further limitations.

None of the references, alone or in combination with each other, teach or otherwise suggest the claimed invention of claims 7 and 10. Specifically, the Terry '303 reference merely teaches a control vane with a first notch and a second notch in a rear edge of the control vane. Further, Terry teaches a control knob having two flanges that define a channel, and the control knob is mounted to the control vane by snap-fitting the control vane into the control vane channel so that the first and second flanges of the control knob are disposed within the first notch of the control vane (column 6, lines 59-64). Terry also teaches that the control knob moves upwardly and downwardly in the notch in the control vane.

Terry '303 does not disclose a vane having one notch in a rear edge of the control vane, as disclosed by the Applicant. Terry '303 does not disclose a compressively resilient pad disposed in the one notch and extending out beyond the rear edge of the control vane. Terry '303 does not disclose that the compressively resilient pad forces the front edge of the control vane in continuous physical contact with the inner surface of the recessed portion of the control knob, as disclosed by the Applicant. The notch in the rear of the vane for receiving the compressively resilient pad as disclosed by the Applicant is functionally as well as structurally distinguishable from the notch for receiving the knob disclosed by Terry '303.

In fact, Terry teaches away from the structural features taught by the Applicant, as shown in FIGS. 7 and 8, where the front edge of the vane within the recess formed in the knob clearly does not come into continuous contact with the inner surface of the knob under any operating condition. Terry shows in these two figures that the knob slides upwardly through the notch with respect to the vane when the knob is pulled forwardly to place the vanes in a diffused mode

(column 7, lines 34-44). The continuous contact between the front edge of the vane and the inner surface of the knob as taught by the Applicant is advantageous, because it insures that the knob and vane move together as one integral member during adjustment of the vane. The sliding movement of Terry '303 is simply not the same as the knob and vane moving together as one integral member, as taught by the Applicant.

The Korean reference merely teaches a knob having a recessed portion and a notch in an inner surface of the recessed portion and a shock absorbing material disposed in the notch, so that a rear side of the shock absorbing material is in contact with a front side of the vane. The Korean reference does not disclose a vane having one notch in a rear edge of the control vane and a compressively resilient pad disposed in the one notch, as disclosed by the Applicant. A knob with a notch for receiving a compressively resistant pad is simply not the same structure as a vane with a notch in a rear edge for receiving a compressively resilient pad.

The combination of references, even if combinable, would not render obvious Applicant's invention as claimed in claims 7 and 10. The Examiner argues that it would be obvious at the time the invention was made for one skilled in the art to use a resilient pad as a means of maintaining position and for shock absorbing. However, the Examiner does not suggest how such a pad would be used and still maintain the structure and function of the invention taught by Terry. There is no writing in Terry to suggest the need to continuously maintain the position of the front edge of the vane in contact with the inner surface of the knob. The inclusion of a compressively resilient pad within the notch and extending out beyond the rear edge of the vane, as suggested by the Examiner, would render the knob taught by Terry completely inoperable. Again, Terry clearly teaches that the knob is disposed within the first notch in the vane and that the knob moves upwardly and downwardly within the notch in order

to place the vanes in a diffused mode. The inclusion of a pad in the notch would prevent the intended movement of the knob as taught by Terry.

The unobvious feature of the present invention is the positioning of the compressively resilient pad within the one notch in the rear edge of the vane, and extending beyond the rear edge, in order to constantly force the front edge of the vane into continuous contact with the second portion of the inner surface of the knob to improve the tactile feel of the knob. The Applicant submits that there is no teaching in the prior art cited by the Examiner to suggest the structure taught by the Applicant. The problem solved by the Applicant is different than the problems solved by the cited references, and there is no reason, suggestion or motivation to combine the references. In addition, the Examiner cannot use the Applicant's invention as an instruction manual or template to piece together the teachings of the prior art so that the claimed invention can be rendered obvious.

The Applicant provides a new and novel vent control knob for an air vent that provides consistent operation and a positive feel to the user. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 7 and 10 as amended and the claims dependent therefrom are allowable over the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

Based on the above, Applicant submits that the claims are in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner finds to the contrary, it is respectfully

requested that the undersigned in charge of this application be called at the telephone number given below to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly M. Bunting
Registration No. 36,072
Gifford, Krass, Groh, Sprinkle,
Anderson & Citkowski, P.C.
2701 Troy Center Drive, Suite 330
P.O. Box 7021
Troy, MI 48007-7021
(248) 647-6000

Attorney for Applicant

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Erica L. Triner